

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

CONTACT: OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(916) 657-7202
(916) 657-8639 - FAX



August 25, 1999 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

99-23

CHP SAYS TRUCK CHASES ENDANGER PUBLIC

SACRAMENTO –Another truck chase, this one on Interstate 80 during morning rush hour, prompted a strong response today from the California Highway Patrol (CHP).

“This kind of reckless behavior is completely irresponsible,” said CHP Commissioner D. O. Helmick. “When you’re talking about the driver of an 80,000-pound vehicle refusing to pull over on a crowded freeway, the potential for death and injury is extremely high.”

The CHP is working closely with the California Trucking Association (CTA) to determine if legislative changes should be recommended to Governor Davis. Joel Anderson, executive vice president of the CTA, has informed the CHP that the association finds the behavior of the truckers completely unacceptable.

Helmick noted the trucker, identified as Charles Peter Macinauskas, 41, was the third trucker in a week that has ignored the CHP when a patrol unit has signaled them to stop. Macinauskas was allegedly driving 65 mph. The speed limit for trucks is 55 mph.

“I’m disappointed that the traditional professionalism of the trucking profession seems to be breaking down. In the past, truckers have been known for looking out for the public,” Helmick said.

Macinauskas worked for Bertolini Trucking, Inc. of Marysville. Bertolini announced following the incident the driver had been fired. The estimated 50-mile chase started in Solano County just after 6 a.m. and terminated at Watt Avenue and Jackson Highway in Sacramento.

The CHP has been targeting truck speed in an effort to reduce the number of collisions caused by big rigs.

—